

Title	Development of e-Country Profiles for key HCCH Conventions
Document	Prel. Doc. No 11 of December 2022
Author	PB
Agenda Item	Item III.4.a.
Mandate(s)	
Objective	To provide information to CGAP 2023 concerning an EU-funded project to develop e-Country Profiles for the 1965 Service, 1970 Evidence, 1980 Abduction, 1993 Adoption, 1996 Child Protection, 2000 Protection of Adults and 2007 Child Support Conventions. The project will run from September 2023 until August 2025.
Action to be Taken	For Decision <input type="checkbox"/> For Approval <input type="checkbox"/> For Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> For Action / Completion <input type="checkbox"/> For Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Annexes	N/A
Related Documents	- Info. Doc. No 2 of March 2011 – Country Profile – 1980 Child Abduction Convention - Prel. Doc. No 3 (final) of September 2012 – Country Profile – 2007 Child Support Convention - Country Profile – 1993 Adoption Convention - Prel. Doc. No 7 of October 2022 (first revised version) – Draft Country Profile – 2000 Protection of Adults Convention

Development of e-Country Profiles for key HCCH Conventions

I. Development of information technology systems in support of HCCH Conventions

- 1 Over the years, CGAP has reaffirmed its support for the activities of the Permanent Bureau (PB) in relation to the use and the development of information technology systems in support of HCCH Conventions in the areas of legal co-operation and family law.¹ Such systems include the e-APP, INCADAT, iSupport and the e-Country Profile under the 2007 Child Support Convention.

II. EU Action Grant for the development of e-Country Profiles for key HCCH Conventions

- 2 The PB has received European Union (EU) Action Grant funding to improve the provision of information on HCCH Conventions through e-Country Profiles. The majority of the funding (90%) was provided by the justice programme of the EU. The remaining 10% was provided by Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, Sweden and the European Union Bailiffs' Foundation (EUBF). EUBF is also participating in the project through the provision of expertise.
- 3 The project will start in September 2023 and end in August 2025. The total budget is € 489,750. The majority of the budget (€ 350,000) is allocated to a contract for the development of these e-Country Profiles, covering the design and delivery of e-Country Profiles as web pages. Content needs to be visualised in both French and English. National authorities must also be able to directly provide content with the appropriate access controls. The remainder of the budget will cover overheads (€ 32,039), audit costs (€ 8,000) and compensation for the human resource costs of the PB and EUBF, in proportion of the time spent on the project.²
- 4 The following HCCH Conventions are included in the Grant Agreement signed with the EU:
 - 2007 Child Support Convention
 - 1980 Child Abduction Convention
 - 1996 Child Protection Convention
 - 1993 Adoption Convention
 - 2000 Protection of Adults Convention
 - 1965 Service Convention
 - 1970 Evidence Convention
- 5 In 2014, thanks to a voluntary contribution from Norway, an e-Country profile was developed by a contractor and released for the 2007 Child Support Convention. This e-Country profile can be completed online by national authorities and is therefore easily updated. It would, however, benefit from a modernised interface to allow for faster completion and improved accessibility (including from mobile devices). In addition, the backend of the software could be modified to allow the PB to extract information for research purposes, which would greatly increase efficiency in using collected data. Furthermore, Central Authority contact details on the HCCH website could be automatically updated using input from the e-Country Profile. Finally, due to the current hosting arrangement (the e-Country Profile is hosted by the contractor), response times when a page is loaded are very slow. This can be frustrating for users and is not in line with current standards (20 seconds as opposed to the 2 to 5 seconds that are now expected). The project will provide the occasion to review that

¹ See, for example, the C&Rs of CGAP 2010, C&R No 26 of CGAP 2011, C&R No 25 of CGAP 2012, C&R Nos 16 and 21 of CGAP 2013, C&R No 16 of CGAP 2014, C&R Nos 16 and 17 of CGAP 2015, C&R No 41 of CGAP 2016, C&R No 33 of CGAP 2017, C&R Nos 24, 26 and 29 of CGAP 2018, C&R Nos 29, 35 and 40 of CGAP 2019, C&D Nos 18, 19, 26, 32 and 34 of CGAP 2020, C&D Nos 20, 31 and 37 of CGAP 2021, and C&D No 28 of CGAP 2022.

² These human resource costs are total employment costs, *i.e.* also including pension contributions.

arrangement. The PB is aware that funding will be required for hosting the e-Country Profiles beyond 2025 and has started researching options. In September 2022 it applied for funding from the Dutch *Nationale Postcode Loterij* to this end.

- 6 As regards the 1980 Child Abduction Convention and the 1996 Child Protection Convention, the PB would like to recall the following Conclusions and Recommendations of the 2017 Special Commission:

“45. The Special Commission recommends, with a high degree of priority, the development of a Country Profile by the Permanent Bureau in consultation with Contracting States to the 1996 Convention and Members of the Organisation. Subject to available resources, this Country Profile should be developed with a view to be implemented in an electronic environment.”

“77. The Special Commission urges Contracting States that have not yet done so to complete a Country Profile for the 1980 Convention as soon as possible. With a view to facilitating its completion and its updating, as well as facilitating the extraction of information, the Special Commission recognises the value of developing, subject to supplementary voluntary contributions, an electronic Country Profile (“e-Country Profile”) for the 1980 Convention.”

- 7 Subject to the work programme and agenda of the upcoming Meeting of the Special Commission(SC) on the Practical Operation of the 1980 Child Abduction Convention and the 1996 Child Protection Convention, a Country Profile for the 1996 Convention could be adopted in principle with a view to be included in this project.
- 8 The 1993 Adoption Convention would benefit from a similar approach, as Country Profiles have already been devised but are only available in PDF format and cannot be completed or updated online.
- 9 On 11 November 2022, the First Meeting of the SC on the practical operation of the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention approved,³ in principle,⁴ a draft 2000 Protection of Adults Convention Country Profile.⁵ The 2000 Protection of Adults Convention Country Profile being in the same format as the 2007 Child Support Convention Country Profile would also benefit from an e-Country Profile approach.
- 10 Finally, for the 1965 Service Convention and the 1970 Evidence Convention, existing country information could be upgraded to also allow for online completion and updates following the same approach as the one suggested for the 2007 Convention. This work could be discussed further at the meeting of the SC in November 2023.
- 11 Within the coming months, the PB will contact Members with a view to providing feedback on the proposed functionalities of the e-Country Profiles. It is emphasised that these discussions on functionality (covering for instance where the e-Country Profiles are hosted) only cover the operation of those e-Country Profiles and not their content, which is determined by the relevant Special Commissions.

III. Proposal to CGAP

- 12 The PB proposes the following C&D to CGAP:

³ See C&R No 66 of the First Meeting of the SC on the practical operation of the 2000 Protection of Adults Convention.

⁴ The draft Country Profile will be reviewed and finalised in light of the latest comments received from HCCH Members, the discussions that took place at the SC and their outcome, with a view to circulating it to HCCH Members for comments on the amendments before submitting the final draft for endorsement by CGAP.

⁵ [Prel. Doc. No 7 of October 2022 \(first revised version\)](#) - 2000 Protection of Adults Convention Draft Country Profile.

CGAP welcomes the development of e-Country Profiles under the 1965 Service Convention, 1970 Evidence Convention, 1980 Child Abduction Convention, 1993 Adoption Convention, 1996 Child Protection Convention, 2000 Protection of Adults Convention, 2007 Child Support Convention and is grateful to the EU and Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, Sweden and EUBF for funding this important initiative.